




# KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

## Supporting COVID-19 Vaccination in Kyrgyz Republic

MOMENTUM Routine Immunization Transformation and Equity in Kyrgyz Republic		
	<b>Where we work</b>	<b>Population</b>
	Provinces: Jalal-Abad, Batken, Chui, and Bishkek oblasts  Districts: 27	Country: 6.8 million (PRB 2022)  Project-supported areas: 2.6 million

## BACKGROUND

The MOMENTUM Routine Immunization Transformation and Equity project (the project) aims to strengthen routine immunization programs to overcome entrenched obstacles that contribute to stagnating and declining immunization rates and address barriers to reaching zero-dose and under-immunized children with life-saving vaccines. The project also provides technical support for COVID-19 vaccination and supports countries to mitigate the consequences of the pandemic on immunization services. The project is implemented by JSI Research & Training Institute, Inc., along with PATH, Accenture Development Partnerships, Results for Development, CORE Group, and The Manoff Group.

The project has been engaged in Kyrgyz Republic to provide technical assistance for COVID-19 vaccination rollout in Jalal-Abad, Batken, Chui, and Bishkek oblasts. Additionally, the project provides coordination at the national level to ensure complementarity among Ministry of Health (MOH) stakeholders and other technical partners working to support communications activities for the COVID-19 vaccination effort.

As of June 26, 2022, Kyrgyz Republic had administered more than 3.25 million doses<sup>1</sup> of COVID-19 vaccines, with about 20 percent of the country's population being fully vaccinated. The country has employed a range of service delivery strategies, including designated vaccination sites, temporary vaccination sites, and the use of mobile teams for vaccinations. Health providers have been trained via online and in-person traditional cascade approaches, but significant knowledge and service delivery gaps still remain.

<sup>1</sup> [https://ourworldindata.org/covid-vaccinations?country=OWID\\_WRL](https://ourworldindata.org/covid-vaccinations?country=OWID_WRL)

## **AREAS OF SUPPORT**

### **COORDINATE COVID-19 VACCINATION PLANNING AND COMMUNICATIONS**

The project will participate in national- and oblast-level communications coordinating mechanisms to ensure the alignment of project activities with the border strategies and efforts of COVID-19 partners and stakeholders. M-RITE will collaborate with key government and donor stakeholders — including the Republican Center for Health Promotion (RCHP), the Republican Center for Immunization (RCI), the World Health Organization (WHO), and the United Nations Fund for Children (UNICEF) — to align existing activities and priorities. The project is also working closely with existing COVID-19 projects, including the Local Health System Sustainability (LHSS) project, to ensure continuity among COVID-19 actors.

### **DESIGN AND IMPLEMENT URBAN-SPECIFIC SOCIAL AND BEHAVIOR CHANGE STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE DEMAND FOR AND UPTAKE OF COVID-19 VACCINES**

The project will work to design an urban-specific social and behavior change (SBC) strategy for COVID-19 vaccination demand generation. An initial landscape assessment will inform a comprehensive SBC approach and identify avenues for supporting advocacy. The analysis will help the project understand where the gaps are and how to best complement the COVID-19 vaccination efforts underway.

### **BUILD CAPACITY OF PRIMARY HEALTH CARE WORKERS TO COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY ABOUT COVID-19 VACCINES TO IMPROVE ACCEPTANCE AND UPTAKE, ESPECIALLY AMONG PRIORITY POPULATIONS**

The project will utilize existing COVID-19 training modules on interpersonal communications (IPC), which the LHSS project developed and the MOH approved. These training activities will strengthen health workers' capacity to provide evidence-based information to support their clients' decision making around COVID-19 vaccination. Additional health worker training modules will be developed by the project in line with identified needs. In addition, the project will coordinate with partners to support development and systematic introduction of printed job aids to complement training activities.

### **ENGAGE VILLAGE HEALTH COMMITTEES AND COMMUNITY HEALTH ACTIVISTS TO PROMOTE UPTAKE OF COVID-19 VACCINES**

The project will leverage existing community engagement approaches from USAID's Advancing Nutrition project to gather information on the communities' concerns and priorities. Additionally, the project will utilize existing COVID-19 community engagement modules developed by LHSS to inform the capacity building of community activists to communicate about COVID-19 vaccination to households in their communities. The project will work with health promotion units and Kyrgyz Association of Village Health Committees staff to implement activities focused on improving mentorship for community mobilizers, enhancing their skills to communicate about COVID-19 vaccination, and working to address barriers to COVID-19 uptake in their communities.

### **STRENGTHEN MICROPLANNING, WITH A FOCUS ON REACHING PRIORITY POPULATIONS**

The project will collaborate with WHO, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and UNICEF as they support the RCI in updating its digital microplanning guidelines to design a system to identify priority populations — including those who are elderly or immunocompromised — and other not-yet-vaccinated or

under-vaccinated groups, and support the design and implementation of strategies to reach them. The project will support the implementation of training on updated microplanning approaches in project oblasts.

### **IMPROVE QUALITY AND USE OF COVID-19 VACCINATION DATA TO IDENTIFY UNVACCINATED INDIVIDUALS AND DESIGN STRATEGIES TO REACH PRIORITY POPULATIONS**

The project will support health authorities in project oblasts in managing COVID-19 vaccination data within the COVID-19 tracking software developed by the MOH, and will conduct supportive supervision visits to health facilities to support data entry and ensure data quality as needed.